

VERWOOD TOWN FOOTBALL CLUB YOUNG REFEREE RISK ASSESSMENT (U18 MATCH OFFICIALS)

Activity: Youth Refereeing – U18 Match Officials

Location: All VTFC pitches and facilities, Verwood

Assessment Completed by: Jason Bartlett, VTFC Youth Referee Coordinator

Basis: Reasonable endeavours, reviewed by Club Committee and Welfare Officer

Review Date: Annually or after any significant incident, venue change, or change in guidance

Purpose

- To identify and reduce risks faced by young referees (under 18) while officiating matches at VTFC.
- To ensure young match officials are safe, supported, and protected at all home and away fixtures.
- To cover safeguarding, conduct, venue safety, travel, emergency procedures, and matchday support arrangements.

Controls

- A DBS-checked adult must be present and visible at every fixture where a young referee is appointed.
- Young referees must never be left alone before, during, or after a fixture. A club adult remains with the referee until they are safely collected by a parent or carer.
- Young referees must not travel alone with an adult who is not their parent or carer. Travel arrangements must be communicated to and agreed by a parent or carer in advance.
- Separate changing facilities must be provided where possible. Young referees must not share changing areas with adult teams.
- A matchday support contact must be identified and confirmed before every fixture. Fixtures should not be allocated without one.
- The FA Respect framework applies to all players, coaches, and spectators. Behaviour expectations must be communicated clearly before kick-off.
- Pitch and surface conditions must be checked before the referee is asked to take the field.
- Young referees should be briefed on the game format, any non-standard rules, and emergency procedures before the match starts.

Matchday Support

- Before the match: provide the fixture details in advance; identify and confirm the matchday support contact; conduct a pitch inspection with the home team manager; brief both teams on Respect expectations; confirm the game format and any non-standard rules.
- During the match: ensure a DBS-checked adult remains visible throughout; keep a Respect Marshal in place where required; address any abuse or poor conduct immediately; allow the referee to take breaks if needed.
- After the match: provide positive and constructive feedback; supervise the referee until safely collected; support with any post-match reports; follow safeguarding procedures if any concern arose.

Emergency and Reporting

- First aid to be administered by the nearest qualified person available.
- Call emergency services where required and keep access routes clear for responders.
- Log injuries, equipment defects, near misses, and safeguarding concerns promptly.
- Safeguarding concerns to be referred immediately to the Club Welfare Officer.
- Serious incidents must be reported to Dorset County FA in accordance with their reporting requirements.
- Club Welfare Officer: Clare Nixson | 07758 246452 | welfare@vtyfc.co.uk

Risk Register

Hazard	Who is at Risk	Potential Consequences	Existing Controls	Further Actions Required
Abuse or intimidation from players, coaches, or spectators	Young referees	Emotional distress, intimidation, withdrawal from refereeing	FA Respect guidelines in place; behaviour expectations communicated before kick-off; Respect Marshal present; Welfare Officer contactable	Assign named matchday support contact for every fixture; provide clear reporting pathway to the young referee before the match
Young referee left alone before, during, or after a fixture	Young referees	Safeguarding concern, distress, risk of harm	Policy requires DBS-checked adult to remain with referee at all times until collected; safe handover point agreed in advance	Club adult to remain with the referee until parent or carer confirms collection; do not leave under any circumstances
Travel to and from away fixtures without appropriate supervision	Young referees	Transport and safeguarding risk	Travel arrangements communicated to and agreed by parent or carer in advance; young referee must not travel alone with an adult who is not their parent or carer	Confirm travel plan with parent or carer before every away appointment; record arrangements

Hazard	Who is at Risk	Potential Consequences	Existing Controls	Further Actions Required
Inadequate or shared changing facilities	Young referees	Safeguarding risk, distress	Separate changing area provided wherever possible; young referees do not share with adult teams	Confirm changing arrangements before the fixture; if separate facilities are unavailable escalate to the Welfare Officer
Physical contact or collision with a player or ball during the match	Young referees	Physical injury, bruising, suspected concussion	Pitch inspection completed before play; referee briefed on safe positioning and spacing from players	Stop play if the referee is injured; follow concussion protocol if head contact occurs; do not allow return to officiating if concussion is suspected
Injury during match or warm-up	Young referees	Physical injury requiring first aid or emergency treatment	First aid kit on site; emergency access routes kept clear; nearest adult to give initial response	Referee to be briefed on injury reporting procedure before kick-off; contact parent or carer immediately if the referee is injured
Uneven ground, debris, or unsafe pitch conditions	Young referees, players	Trips, falls, sprains, impact injuries	Pre-match pitch inspection completed; play suspended if conditions are unsafe	Record any defects and escalate for repair; do not commence play on an unsafe surface
Weather exposure including cold, wet, heat, or wind	Young referees	Exposure, slips, dehydration	Weather checked before fixture; referee advised on appropriate kit and hydration	Allow breaks if conditions worsen; abandon or postpone if conditions become unsafe
Lack of confidence, anxiety, or poor mental wellbeing	Young referees	Stress, impact on performance, withdrawal from the role	Pre-match briefing provided; positive and encouraging culture maintained; mentor assigned where possible	Provide constructive post-match feedback; check in with the referee after difficult matches; escalate welfare concerns to the CWO
No matchday support contact confirmed for the fixture	Young referees	Isolation, reduced support, safeguarding gap	Referee Coordinator confirms support contact before issuing each appointment	Do not allocate a fixture to a young referee without a named and confirmed matchday support contact in place
Photography or filming of a young referee without consent	Young referees	Safeguarding risk, distress, privacy concern	Club photography policy applies to all match officials; consent required for any images of under-18s	Report any photography concern to the Club Welfare Officer immediately